



Where Christmas Really Began

By Sara Lockwood Williams



TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO Augustus Caesar issued a decree that all the world was to be taxed.

Thus Joseph took Mary, his betrothed, from the home of her mother Ann in Jerusalem and journeyed to Bethlehem to pay their taxes. Now the way was six miles. Mary, seated sidewise on a small donkey, with their few belongings tied in a cloth hanging across the donkey's neck, and Joseph trudging beside her, found their way through the narrow streets of ancient Jerusalem, through the Joppa (or Jafa) Gate down into the Valley of Gihon, then up to the ridge or water-shed of Palestine's hill country and on to the Plain of Rephaim. Midway on the plain they probably paused beside the road to drink from a well. They did not know this well would some day be called the Well of the Magi because the three Wise Shepherds following "God's bright star" would stop there to drink and to see the star reflected in the water's depths as they traveled by camel to Bethlehem in search of Jesus, the Son soon to be born of Mary.

Joseph and Mary were humble and fine and they loved each other. They gazed happily across the well-cultivated terraced valleys, across the fields where shepherds guarded their flocks, noted the old stone watch towers where the farmers and shepherds could go to look far across their lands in all directions. Then they glimpsed the city of Bethlehem, a small and humble village whose rock walls, cobbled streets and stone buildings showed gray and uninviting.

The man and woman wended their way through the throngs of tax-payers about the bazaars and found the inn where they sought lodging. The inn was overflowing. People were having to sleep by the wayside. Now Mary was with child and Joseph wanted to protect her and make her comfortable, but no room was to be had. So the couple sought shelter in the stable beside their tiny donkey. The stable was a cave or grotto in the rocks with crude wooden mangers filled with hay. Here, in the year 4 B.C., the thirty-third year of the reign of Herod the Great, Jesus of Nazareth was born. Mary wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger. Here the shepherds, to whom angels had announced the Saviour's birth, came to kneel low beside the humble bed and lay their gifts before the Babe whom they adored.

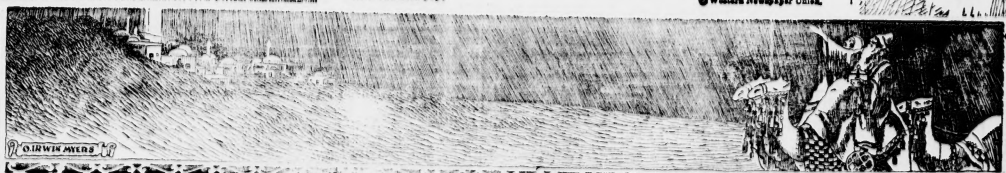
Because this Babe was born the whole world rejoices and celebrates Christmas. Joy, peace, love, humility—all the great truths of Christianity came to the world with His birth. The basis of modern civilization lies in the little town of Bethlehem.

Even as the Wise Men 2000 years ago made their way to the shrine, so pilgrims, tourists, believers and non-believers journey today across the self-same road, still the main artery of communication between Jerusalem and all the southern part of Israel. They see the Well of the Magi, the terraced gardens, the shepherds' fields, and the old, old watch towers. The highway is now smoothly paved. The travelers all too often ride in luxurious motor cars. But they still pass caravans of camels and asses and see pedestrians garbed in costumes of many lands. For pilgrims come from near and far to the Holy Land, particularly to ancient Bethlehem, whose grayness has increased with centuries of dust and erosion on its leaden-hued stones. But dull as is its outward appearance, few approach the city without a thrill of reverence and awe, without renewing acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures and gaining inspiration and faith. Today they cross the lively bazaars where "objects of piety" made of shells, mother-of-pearl and olive wood have wide space among the food-stuffs and goods for sale. They go to the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem's greatest relic of antiquity. In 330, Constantine built this basilica above what is believed to be the grotto-stable in which Christ was born. The church looks like a fortress and its entrance door is so small even a short person must stoop to enter. It was made thus not, as some say, to cause thoughts of humility and reverence upon entering so holy a place, but to prevent the ancient Saracens and Turks when they were in power from desecrating the place with cattle. Five different nationalities of Christians now guard this church and hold services here. The place is strikingly simple. The Greek Orthodox and the Armenian and Syrian churches occupy the main floor. Two circular stairways lead to the dark caves below. There is a chapel in the grotto. On the floor is a great silver star with silver nails over a hollow where Mary is said to have given birth to Jesus. Around the star is the inscription:

"Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est."

Fifteen silver lamps unceasingly burn day and night over this holy place. Four belong to the Latins, six to the Greek Orthodox, and five to the Armenians and Syrians. Representatives from many Christian nations kneel in common before the little altar. Seldom is the grotto without worshippers. Whether or not they believe this to be the authentic spot of the Nativity, it carries the atmosphere of holiness and spirituality. The handsome, proud natives of Bethlehem seem always a happy people, but at Christmas time Bethlehem radiates joy.

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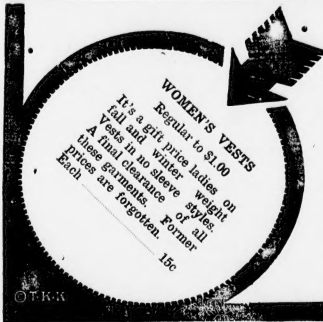


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LOCALS

Mr. and Mrs. Lounsbury are leaving Friday for Illinois where they will spend three weeks with Mr. Lounsbury's father.

School concerts hold the centre of the stage in all directions for the next week.

Strathmore Schools will close for the Christmas holidays Wednesday December 22nd and resume Monday, January 4th, 1937.

Mr. and Mrs. Hittle were invited guests at the luncheon and reception given Monday in the Palliser for Sir Guy Standing.

Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Williams and Doris were Strathmore visitors Sunday.

Michael Young will return to his home Sunday from Vancouver to spend the vacation with his parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harvey and three children left Monday on a motor trip to Victoria where they will spend the next month with Mrs. Harvey's parents and also visit other friends.

Aunt Annie, a general favorite with Crescent neighbors and sister-in-law of Mr. Barnett was taken to a Calgary Hospital Friday last suffering from pneumonia.

Misses A. and G. Peter of Calgary are visiting Miss H. Peter at the Therage, Hervey School.

DEATH OF PAUL J. PAULSON

The death took place at Standard on December 6th, 1936 of Paul Johannes Paulson, age 39 years. Deceased was born in Denmark and leaves a fatherland mother who still reside there.

Mr. Paulson was employed in the mine at Standard and his sudden death came as a shock to his many friends.

The funeral took place at Standard Wednesday, December 9th, interment being made in Standard cemetery. Rev. Rick officiated.

The funeral arrangements were in charge of Chase & Co. Strathmore.

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Wishes all its Customers and Friends
A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS SEASON
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Make Your Christmas Dinner Right With
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Greetings-

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

And a

PROSPEROUS 1937

White & Gray

Strathmore, Alberta

THE KING—AND WHY.

The following article passed on to us by a local subscriber, was published in the Montreal Star in 1919. It is especially interesting in view of present unaverted conditions.

Newcomers from the United States bring in with them, along with enterprise and intelligence which make them heartily welcome, certain illusions as to the framework of our constitution.

As to the King, particularly.

Naturally enough, as the constitution they were brought up to reverence was that of a "republic" and so it included no officer called a "king" they are inclined to think that king ship is in some way inconsistent with democracy, or at any rate a more expeditious role of a time when we were not democratic.

The illusion soon vanishes when they bring themselves to study facts rather than names.

The English were essentially a democratic nation centuries before the United States existed, before America was even discovered.

Again and again, when individual kings attempted to govern by self-made laws in defiance of the law agreed to by the representatives of the people, the democratic spirit stubbornly upheld its rights. The struggle to make the people's will supreme was often suppressed, but always succeeded in the end.

Again and again a king who had forfeited the confidence of his people by setting his will against their was forced to yield, or, if he held out too long was evicted from the throne.

Milton, the gentle poet but unswerving democrat, in the struggle that cost King Charles his life, put the facts in the clearest possible language—

"Our King made not us, but we him. Nature has given fathers to us all, but we ourselves appointed our own King, so that the people is not for the King, but the King for them."

The King, in fact, holds his throne in trust for his people.

There is no nation without a King. Our neighbors elect their king every four years and call him a president. We elect our president whenever we see cause and call him a king.

We are a practical people, and we find great practical advantages in having a president who simply presides, and is retained in office, so to speak,

"during life or good behavior." We leave the direction of the national business to a general manager, called a prime minister, in each great self-governing country of our Empire—the ministry being liable at any time to election by the representatives of the people elected every few years.

The system of electing our law makers is still defective, and must be perfected, so that our parliament shall completely represent every class of citizens, but the very part of our constitutional machinery that the extreme radical or socialist would lift a finger to disturb is the office of King. For he alone belongs to no party, favors no class, represents no sectional interest—he is, therefore, who unites and represents us all.—(101)—

MESSAGES

Continued from Page 3

The Women's Institute wishes every one a Merry Christmas and every happiness in the New Year.

Thanking all for their support during the past year.

Mrs. H. T. ROSSVAIN, Sec.

As the Christmas season and the year 1937 approach we take this opportunity to thank those who supported us in the past and wish one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

STRATHMORE DRAMATIC CLUB
Geraldine Van Tighem, Sec-Treas.

It is a privilege we value highly, in being able to extend to all, our fraternal greetings at this festive season. May this Christmas be a Merry one, and in the New Year and for many years to come may you and yours enjoy Good Fortune, Good Health and Good Will.

STRATHMORE LODGE A. F. & A. M.

(101)

TREES AVAILABLE

FOR FARMERS

In connection with the statement of the Alberta Government published last October regarding certain types of trees being available to farmers for transplanting, it was learned in an interview given today by the Honour-

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able C. C. Ross, Minister of Lands and Mines, that a large number of Lodgepole Pine, and to a lesser extent Scotch Pine, are still procurable from the Forestry Division of the Department. As a result, applications for these two species for transplanting next spring will continue to be received up to January 31st, 1937.

The stock referred to is stated to be large and healthy. It is available only for additions and replacements in windbreaks and natural bluffs. Application forms are obtainable from the Director of Forestry, Department of Lands and Mines, Edmonton.

Does Honesty Pay?

Usually, the answer is as obvious as the fact that two and two make four no matter how you try to get any other total. Is there a substitute for honesty in our friends, our neighbours, our business associates? Would not the very foundations of our everyday life topple without the trust and faith we put in the word of others?

Sometimes, in our haste to attain a certain difficult objective, we may overlook certain factors. Perhaps it is wise then that we should stop now and ask ourselves that single yet essential question, "Does Honesty Pay?"

An individual certainly makes little progress if he consistently adopts a policy which is not fundamentally honest. Therefore, does it not follow that a group of individuals would suffer the same penalty if it adopted a similar policy?

In other words, can two wrongs ever make a right? Can this province afford to pay the penalty of breaking faith with those who accepted our word in good faith? Will the immediate gain be more wiped out by loss of our individual and collective honesty in the immediate future in the eyes of those to whom we MUST eventually go for financial support?

The answers to these questions concern every man, woman and child in Alberta today. Our future and our children's future is at stake.

This statement is one of a series written by The Mortgage Lenders Association of the Province of Alberta. The Association is composed of 14 member companies. It represents hundreds of thousands of small investments by typical Canadians. Its loans to citizens of Alberta amount to some forty-five million dollars.

(The fourth statement in this series will be published in two weeks)



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WHY GO TO BETHLEHEM?

"Let us go to Bethlehem!" In the original circumstances a perfectly natural thing to say. The startling thing is that we are saying it still, after three hundreds of years. Not merely saying it but singing it all over the world. To Bethlehem has an ancient, religious, second. Bethlehem was never such a place to go to. But, in recent tradition associated with the story of David, yet still, all we have was only a small town in the hills. There were really great places, places few would suspect. As a matter of fact, it is an article and scholars, Cretin and Alexander and Ephesus, the rich, populous cities. What was there at Bethlehem? When the shepherds got there what did they see? Not the town nor its leading citizens. A rude cave on the hillside, a shelter for cattle, a wretched place. A shed for cows. And in it a man and woman and a baby. Really, when you think of it, a shameful sight. A feeble young mother with her new born child and no better place than this for the two of them. And that was all.

One wonders what the shepherds expected to see. "This thing which has come to pass," they called it. Were they disappointed? A poor attitude, surely, for their child. And those stately wise shepherds with their camels and treasures? Were they filled with astonishment when they heard their leader to get inside the low cave and found there a weary woman and a helpless infant? They all were looking for a king to slay their foes and set them high. They cannot a little baby thing that made woman cry.

However they felt about it, however little or much they saw in it, we have to face the astounding fact that what they looked at the world has refused to forget for almost two thousand years. And every year the world goes to Bethlehem. Every year millions of people sing. To Bethlehem hasten now with glad accord. What is this thing that lasts and grows and means more through the centuries? Why this one universal, eternal little day? Why o to Bethlehem? Why make so much, so immeasurably much, of this commonplace event, the birth of a human child, and birth in such poverty stricken shameful conditions? The blindest cannot fail to see an amazing mystery to it. There must be some reason why we go to Bethlehem. "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing."

There was just one thing to see at Bethlehem, a new born child. He occupies all the stage. The surroundings rough shed, straw, cattle and manger, even Joseph and Mary, are just acting. In a royal palace there would have been distractions. The shepherds would have been intrigued by magnificence and beauty. The linen and embroidered and lavish equipment that goes with the birth of a royal child would have been conspicuous. But there is nothing to distract attention in the stable. Only The Child. Here is the secret of the unending charm of this birth. It unveils the marvel and glory of Man. In a way we always know that man is everything. Any young mother who holds her baby in her arms knows he is incomparably more valuable than all the wealth of the world, than the very globe itself. The stupidest mistake we make is to fancy that markets and money and things are more to be valued and thought about than human beings. It is the human beings that give things any value they have. When we act on that estimate we begin to achieve an enduring civilization. This inestimable value of Man is set before us in the Babe of Bethlehem. He manifests our greatness, our relationship, our preclusion to God. The same truth we discover in the story of the prodigal son. Why go to Bethlehem? Because we find there who we are and who our fellows are. A little naked baby? A man's a man for a' that! The man's the gowd for a' that!

But the shepherds went to Bethlehem because of news that came to them out of the skies. There was joy in heaven. Angels came to earth singing. Something had happened in Bethlehem. The wise men learned it from a star. Stars are very wonderful. There are so many of them and they are so far away. That light shines in to our eyes. I understand that 90 per cent of the starlight as signs come from supernovae. There's something to think about. The wise men learned a worshipping thing from the star, that heaven has to do with earth. There could be no earth if there were no sky and stars. That tells us something. Tells us that God has to do with man. There could be no man if there were not God. God, who touches us, whose unseen light shines upon us. God who comes to us out of the distant heaven and gives Himself to men lives in men. Did the wise men as they marched on their tall camels through the desert have thoughts like these? God was coming down to earth and giving Himself in Man is that why they acted so strangely? Why they knelt in the wretched cowshed?

STRATHMORE STANDARD

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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS PAYABLE IN ADVANCE

Why they laid their gifts on its earth, it discovers to be that we are. His children. That he lives in us. That we live in him. That this world of ours with its blue roof and green floor and all the glittering lights and everything is as holy as it is marvelous and beautiful. "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing."

REV. J. A. CLARKE, D. D.,
Former Pastor of Knox United Church
Calgary, Alta.

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to our Customers, and a Bright and Happy
New Year for All.

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BRIGHT AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR TO ALL

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AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



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STRAYED ON FARM OF A. D. ASH-
 ley, one 2-year old steer, brand on
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 D. Ashley, Phone 1111 Strathmore.

DISTRICT NEWS NOT APPEARING
 IN THIS ISSUE WILL BE PUB-
 LISHED NEXT WEEK.

TOWN OF STRATHMORE

— NOTICE —

Taxpayers are reminded that taxes
 unpaid during the month of Decem-
 ber will on 1st January 1937 be sub-
 ject to a penalty of 4 per cent.
 T. M. WEALIS, Secy-Treas.
 Dec 24.

A. L. WILLIAMS, B. A.
 Secretary-Treasurer, Grasswood M. L.
 ROCKYFORD—PHONE No. 31
 Barrister, Solicitor, Notary
 Business Service and Insurance

Church Notes

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
 Strathmore, Alberta
 Rev. V. W. Gilbert, B.A., S.D.
 Minister

Sunday, December 20, 1936
 11 a.m. Combined School & Church.
 Chancel—

2:30 p.m. Worship.
 Strathmore—
 11 a.m. Church School.
 7:30 p.m. Worship.
 "Why Worship Christ?"
 Pianist and Choir Leader—
 Miss M. Hirtle, Graduate of
 Mount Allison Conservatory.

ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS'
 CHURCH, STRATHMORE
 Sunday, December 20th

Strathmore—
 8 a.m. Holy Communion.
 11 a.m. Morning Prayer.
 Nightingale—
 3 p.m. Holy Communion & Sermon.
 Christmas Music.
 Strathmore—
 7:30 p.m. Evening and Sermon.
 REV. G. W. WILEY

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Mass every Sunday 10:30 a.m. ex-
 cepting first Sunday of the month,
 when Mass will be at 10 a.m.

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 and a Prosperous New Year

ARDENODE

Mr and Mrs Alec Watson spent the
 week end in Calgary.

Miss Mary Gibson spent the week
 end visiting Mr and Mrs T. Chamber-
 lain.

Mrs Alex Melnychuk is visiting her
 brother who is very sick in Tilley.

Be sure and reserve the night of
 December 23rd for the annual concert
 to be held at Sevierville. Crest
 School. We promise you a wonderful
 time for young and old alike.

We are very sorry to hear that the
 children of Mr and Mrs L. Hilton are
 down with the whooping cough. We
 sincerely hope for a speedy recovery.

Mr and Mrs L. Hilton have just re-
 turned from a short holiday spent in
 Calgary and Leduc.

Mr Roy Compton spent Friday
 in the big city supposedly looking for
 Santa Claus.

Mr James and son Bill were seen
 window gazing in Calgary Friday last.

GLENCAIRN

The Glencairn Gardens hockey rink
 has been re-established at Jackson's
 lake. The fans are looking forward to
 a number of exciting games during the
 winter season.

The Glencairn team looks to be in
 fine early season form. With such
 crack defencemen as Jack Groves and
 W. Downey to bowl them over and
 with Bea McDonald in rare form, be-
 tween the posts, the opponents will
 have a tough time to score. The pre-
 sent rules are made to order for such
 rugged top-notch sharp shooters as
 Harold Downey and Stew Groves. The
 management is interested in arrang-
 ing games. Phone the Glencairn Gar-
 dens.

The Girls Club met at the home of
 Miss Mary Groves on December 5th.
 Two tables of whist were played,
 with Mrs Florence Downey holding
 the high score and Mrs B. Royal carry-
 ing off the consolation. A delicious
 lunch was served by the hostess.

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For Strathmore		For Carleton	
Going West	8:56 p.m.	Going West	6:48 a.m.
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With Peanuts,

2 lbs 35c

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Chocolates,

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High grade

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Always Fresh.

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